

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

12 and 13 November 2013

(Extract from book 15)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr P. Davis, Mr Hall, Ms Lovell, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Scheffer.

Procedure Committee — The President, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Viney

Legislative Council standing committees

Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, Mr Melhem, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford and Mr Ramsay.

Economy and Infrastructure References Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, Mr Melhem, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford and Mr Ramsay.

Environment and Planning Legislation Committee — Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Environment and Planning References Committee — Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Ms Mikakos, Mrs Millar, Mr O'Brien, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Legal and Social Issues References Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Ms Mikakos, Mrs Millar, Mr O'Brien, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

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Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Mr P. Davis, Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr McIntosh and Ms Neville.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Merlino, Mr O'Brien and Mr Walsh.

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Environment and Natural Resources Committee — (*Council*): Mr Koch. (*Assembly*): Mr Bull, Ms Duncan, Mr Pandazopoulos and Ms Wreford.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Coote, Ms Crozier and Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McGuire and Mr Wakeling.

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Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Council*): Mr Viney. (*Assembly*): Ms Hennessy, Mr McIntosh, Mr Newton-Brown and Mr Weller.

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Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Mr Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Ms Barker, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella, Dr Sykes and Mr Watt.

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

President: The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

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Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

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Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

Mr G. JENNINGS

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The Hon. P. R. HALL

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Mr D. DRUM

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Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
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Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP

¹ Resigned 26 March 2013

² Appointed 8 May 2013

³ Resigned 1 July 2013

⁴ Appointed 21 August 2013

CONTENTS

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2013

621.	<i>Mental health: Ballarat Base Hospital</i>	3743
8591.	<i>Children and early childhood development: teacher qualifications</i>	3743
8596.	<i>Children and early childhood development: maternal and child health services</i>	3744
8993.	<i>Children and early childhood development: Victorian Children's Council</i>	3747
9459.	<i>Housing: social housing policy</i>	3747
9464.	<i>Children and early childhood development: children's services assessment.....</i>	3747
9474.	<i>Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults</i>	3748
9475.	<i>Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults</i>	3749
9476.	<i>Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults</i>	3749
9512.	<i>Education: Docklands primary school</i>	3750
9530.	<i>Ageing: personal alert devices</i>	3750

WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2013

9468.	<i>Community services: youth justice centre staff.....</i>	3751
9473.	<i>Ageing: public sector residential aged-care facilities</i>	3751
9563.	<i>Housing: rent increases</i>	3752
9564.	<i>Community services: out-of-home care services</i>	3753
9839.	<i>Employment and trade: Ballarat job losses</i>	3754
9910.	<i>Employment and trade: Ballarat job losses</i>	3754
9911.	<i>Employment and trade: Warrnambool job losses</i>	3755

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Council.
Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.
The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

Tuesday, 12 November 2013

Mental health: Ballarat Base Hospital

- 621. MS PULFORD** — To ask the Minister for Health (for the Minister for Mental Health): How many acute beds and subacute beds were there at Ballarat Base Hospital as at —
- (a) 30 June 2006;
 - (b) 30 June 2007;
 - (c) 30 June 2008;
 - (d) 30 June 2009;
 - (e) 30 June 2010;
 - (f) 3 December 2010; and
 - (g) 3 April 2011.

ANSWER:

As the member will know, daily bed numbers fluctuate according to hospital activity and clinical demand. Hospitals do not audit beds at 30 June each year, or the dates mentioned.

[Question 621 reinstated by order of President on 13 September 2011. Hansard reference to original answer: 30 June 2011, page 2377]

Children and early childhood development: teacher qualifications

- 8591. MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: In relation to the requirement that all children's services in Victoria must have at least 50 per cent of educators at diploma level or higher by 2014:
- (1) Has your department undertaken an analysis into whether Victoria's early childhood services will meet this requirement by the required date.
 - (2) What proportion of Victoria's early childhood services will have met this requirement by 2014.
 - (3) Will this requirement be met by 2014.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) On 12 February 2013, the Australian government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) appointed PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to conduct the 2013 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Review (the report). The objective of the report is to determine the progress that the ECEC sector has made towards meeting qualification requirements due to come into force from 1 January 2014, particularly in relation to early childhood teachers and rural and remote workforces.

The report is being conducted in two phases. The key activities in phase one include analysis of existing data, review of ECEC workforce policies and qualitative analysis, involving discussions with a range of stakeholders nationally through a series of 16 targeted focus groups held in locations negotiated with jurisdiction nominated representatives.

Phase two of the report will be prepared in late 2013 and will include analysis of the new data collected from the National ECEC Workforce Census which is in progress and will be available in late 2013. It will also identify any changes required to the preliminary findings outlined in phase one of the report and identify additional gaps or areas where attention needs be appropriately focussed. Phase two of the report will determine progress towards meeting the qualification requirements.

- (2) Phase two of the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Review will determine progress towards meeting the qualification requirements.
- (3) Victoria is well placed to meet the diploma level early learning qualification requirements.

Children and early childhood development: maternal and child health services

8596. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: In relation to Victoria’s maternal and child health centres, I seek:

- (1) The amount of funding provided to each local government area in respect of maternal and child health services.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

Since December 2010, the coalition government has supported maternal and child health (MCH) services, including a record investment of \$79 million in the 2012–13 budget.

This included \$62.7 million for universal MCH services and \$16.3 million for enhanced MCH services.

The amount received by each LGA in 2013–14 is outlined below.

It should be noted that funding to local government areas for MCH changes from year to year, as funding is allocated on a per capita basis.

Municipality	Total Funding 2013-2014 Universal + Enhanced MCH
Alpine Shire	153 305
Ararat Rural City	142 780
Ballarat City	814 375
Banyule City	805 531
Bass Coast Shire	263 323
Baw Baw Shire	371 840
Bayside City	464 825
Benalla	174 332
Boroondara City	751 588
Brimbank City	1 750 157
Buloke Shire	152 060
Campaspe Shire	325 924
Cardinia Shire	766 011
Casey City	2 458 759

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 12 November 2013

COUNCIL

3745

Municipality	Total Funding 2013-2014 Universal + Enhanced MCH
Central Goldfields Shire	142 260
Colac-Otway Shire	202 679
Corangamite Shire	182 078
Darebin City	1 076 730
East Gippsland Shire	440 537
Frankston City	1 043 397
Gannawarra Shire	168 534
Glen Eira City	862 875
Glenelg Shire	213 633
Golden Plains Shire	167 026
Greater Bendigo City	861 519
Greater Dandenong City	1 485 951
Greater Geelong City	1 592 733
Greater Shepparton City	635 900
Hepburn Shire	137 279
Hindmarsh Shire	190 357
Hobsons Bay City	682 932
Horsham Rural City	261 599
Hume City	1 873 111
Indigo Shire	123 546
Kingston City	945 318
Knox City	982 815
La Trobe Shire	687 536
Loddon Shire	111 097
Macedon Ranges Shire	280 921
Manningham City	560 196
Mansfield	123 111
Maribyrnong City	740 126
Maroondah City	757 812
Melbourne City	493 799
Melton Shire	1 241 725
Mildura Rural City	581 422
Mitchell Shire	344 483

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

3746

COUNCIL

Tuesday, 12 November 2013

Municipality	Total Funding 2013-2014 Universal + Enhanced MCH
Moira Shire	307 446
Monash City	986 689
Moonee Valley City	728 879
Moorabool Shire	228 723
Moreland City	1 212 798
Mornington Peninsula Shire	930 793
Mount Alexander Shire	135 177
Moyne Shire	181 644
Murrindindi Shire	143 024
Nillumbik Shire	320 837
Northern Grampians Shire	159 746
Port Phillip City	620 168
Pyrenees Shire	93 950
Queenscliffe Borough	47 201
South Gippsland Shire	255 149
Southern Grampians Shire	195 865
Stonnington City	488 188
Strathbogie Shire	103 829
Surf Coast Shire	215 102
Swan Hill Rural City	327 602
Towong Shire	124 011
Wangaratta Rural City	261 752
Warrnambool City	275 291
Wellington Shire	394 750
West Wimmera Shire	158 982
Whitehorse City	980 958
Whittlesea City	1 638 275
Wodonga Rural City	372 960
Wyndham City	2 141 600
Yarra City	514 538
Yarra Ranges Shire	1 028 910
Yarriambiack Shire	174 365
Total	45 339 049

In addition the department also provides \$224 790 to Victorian Aboriginal Health Services.

Children and early childhood development: Victorian Children’s Council

8993. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: In relation to the Victorian Children’s Council, has the minister received findings or recommendations relating to either legislative reform or budgetary measures from the council since December 2010; if so, what are they.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

On 21 December 2012, the department received a freedom of information request from Ms Jenny Mikakos, MP, member for Northern Metropolitan Region.

A search for documents was undertaken. Over 100 pages of relevant documents pertaining to the request, including correspondence to minister and the Premier, attached advice, reports and meeting minutes, were located.

In accordance with sections 30(1) and 35(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 1982, it was determined this information was exempt from release.

Specifically, it has been determined that disclosure of the information could compromise the potential for council members to provide independent, expert advice.

A letter was sent to Ms Mikakos on 11 February 2013 detailing the access decision.

Ms Mikakos sought a review of this decision with the FOI commissioner. The FOI commissioner upheld the decision to not release all of the documents, apart from a one-page letter which the FOI commissioner considered purely factual — which was subsequently released to Ms Mikakos.

Housing: social housing policy

9459. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Housing: In relation to the ‘Pathways to a new Victorian social housing framework’ consultation and policy development:

- (1) Will the government be publishing submissions to the consultation on the Department of Human Services website.
- (2) Have consultants been involved in reviewing submissions and reporting; if so, which firm/s.
- (3) Given the high volume of submissions, what is the process for reviewing submissions and how will the government prioritise what information or advice is considered closely and given weight in subsequent reporting or policy development.

ANSWER:

- (1) Due to privacy considerations, individual submissions will not be made public. However, some peak bodies and other community organisations have chosen to make their submissions publicly available.
- (2) KPMG was contracted to undertake consultation and to report on submissions and feedback from public consultations.
- (3) The government undertook significant consultation with tenants, the housing sector and peak bodies and information received is being reviewed as part of the development of the Victorian social housing framework.

Children and early childhood development: children’s services assessment

9464. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: In relation to Victoria’s early childhood services: How many inspections of licensed children’s services took place —

- (a) in the 2010–11 financial year;
- (b) in the 2011–12 financial year; and
- (c) between 1 July and 31 December 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The National Quality Framework and the Education and Care Services National Law 2010 commenced operation in Victoria on 1 January 2012. The national law provides the regulatory framework for long day care services, kindergartens, family day-care services and outside school hours care. Children’s services remaining under the Victorian Children’s Services Act 1996 include occasional care and budget-based services.

Under the national law, in addition to compliance visits, services are assessed and rated against the seven quality areas comprising the national quality standard. This is a far more intensive process which places emphasis on the quality of the educational program provided and the developmental and learning needs for each child as well as considering a service’s compliance.

Assessment and rating visits commenced in July 2012 and may take up to five days for large services. Comparisons across the two different legislative arrangements cannot therefore be made.

- (a) In 2010–11 there were 4251 inspections of licensed children’s services.
- (b) In 2011–12 there were 2373 inspections of licensed children’s services and 1562 inspections of approved education and care services.
- (c) For the period 1 July–31 December 2012 there were 92 inspections of licensed children’s services and 1082 inspections of approved education and care services (including 484 assessment and rating visits).

Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults

9474. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to assaults occurring in the Parkville Youth Residential Centre:

- (1) How many assaults occurred between 1 July and 31 December 2012 involving —
 - (a) clients;
 - (b) staff; and
 - (c) visitors.
- (2) How many incidents of assaults resulted in the client requiring external medical assistance and/or an ambulance attending the facility.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1)
 - (a) Nil.
 - (b) Nil.
 - (c) Nil.
- (2) Nil.

Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults

9475. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to assaults occurring in the Melbourne Youth Justice Facility:

- (1) How many assaults occurred between 1 July and 31 December 2012 involving —
 - (a) clients;
 - (b) staff; and
 - (c) visitors.
- (2) How many incidents of assaults resulted in the client requiring external medical assistance and/or an ambulance attending the facility.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1)
 - (a) 6 allegations of client to client.
 - (b) 10 allegations of client to staff or staff to client.
 - (c) Nil.
- (2) 4.

Children and early childhood development: youth justice centre assaults

9476. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to assaults occurring in the Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre:

- (1) How many assaults occurred between 1 July and 31 December 2012 involving —
 - (a) clients;
 - (b) staff; and
 - (c) visitors.
- (2) How many incidents of assaults resulted in the client requiring external medical assistance and/or an ambulance attending the facility.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1)
 - (a) 7 allegations of client to client.
 - (b) 3 allegations of client to staff or staff to client.
 - (c) Nil.
- (2) 4.

Education: Docklands primary school

9512. MS PENNICUIK — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister for Education): What is the accurate figure of the expected number of primary-aged children in the Docklands precinct from 2012 to 2022 and what is the source of that figure, given that: a report by Ernst & Young found the number of 5 to 12-year-olds in Southbank and Docklands will jump from 285 in 2011 to 1366 in 2021; the Docklands is forecast to have 750 children aged 14 and under by 2016 according to Places Victoria chief executive Mr Peter Seamer; and a spokesman for the minister produced a recent feasibility study showing there was a ‘limited case’ for a new state primary school in Docklands, with a projected demand of 156 students by 2016.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development continues to work with the relevant agencies to plan to meet the infrastructure needs of the growing Docklands community.

In 2010 the department commissioned independent consultants to review the demand for future government school provision in Docklands. The 2010 study identified that in 2016, 156 government primary school students are expected to reside in Docklands, and that this number will grow to 233 government primary school students by 2021. Departmental records show that there are currently 53 government primary students residing in Docklands, up from 46 in 2012.

When planning for new schools, the department regularly monitors residential growth, demographic change and enrolment trends to ensure that all schools demonstrate viable long-term enrolments. Government primary schools require minimum long term enrolments of 450 students to enable the ideal breadth of curriculum and adequate classroom sizes within schools.

Previous studies undertaken by the department have identified that the Docklands is not yet at the stage where a viable long-term enrolment can be sustained.

Over the last three budgets, the government has invested approximately \$80 million in the purchase of land and over \$125 million for the construction of new schools across Victoria, as well as supporting a number of planning projects in inner city areas.

In the 2013–14 state budget, the government announced funding for the acquisition of a site at Ferrars Street, South Melbourne, for a future government primary school which will meet the increasing demand for primary school provision in Melbourne’s inner suburbs.

Ageing: personal alert devices

9530. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to Personal Alerts Victoria (PAV): How many people were waiting to be issued a personal alert as at 1 January 2013.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Funding has been increased for Personal Alerts Victoria (PAV) in 2012–13 to address the demand. Reflected in the 1780 people on the wait list for a personal alert as at 1 January 2013.

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The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

Wednesday, 13 November 2013

Community services: youth justice centre staff

9468. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the Melbourne Youth Justice Facility, what was the total number of staff, not including administrative staff, employed on —

- (a) 1 January 2011;
- (b) 1 July 2011;
- (c) 1 January 2012;
- (d) 1 July 2012; and
- (e) 1 January 2013.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

In July 2009 the number of direct care staff employed at the Melbourne Youth Justice Centre was 185. The number of staff, including the casual staff pool, was increased to 204 by July 2010 to manage an increasingly complex and violent population of offenders with limited static security measures.

The need for this increase was highlighted by an escape from the centre on 19 May 2010. Staff increased to 219 on 1 January 2011, whilst security processes and infrastructure were being enhanced.

With the establishment of a single entry point to the Parkville youth justice precinct; the introduction of security personnel and streamlined admission and visitor reception processes; the introduction of a dedicated specialist response team to respond to incidents and the introduction of CCTV, the number of staff slowly returned to a level that is appropriate for a secure environment with efficient rostering practices. There were 208 direct care staff employed at Melbourne Youth Justice Centre on 1 July 2011, 193 on 1 January 2012, 191 on 1 July 2012 and 171 on 1 January 2013.

Ageing: public sector residential aged-care facilities

9473. **MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Ageing: In relation to public sector residential aged-care facilities in Victoria:

- (1) What is the number of breaches of the Aged Care Act 1997 (cth) for each facility between —
 - (a) 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012; and
 - (b) 1 July and 31 December 2012.
- (2) What is the number of breaches of the Health Services Act 1988 for each facility between —
 - (a) 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012; and
 - (b) 1 July and 31 December 2012.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) (a) Between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012, there were 13 breaches of the commonwealth's Aged Care Act identified in 13 public sector residential aged-care facilities.
- (1) (b) Between 1 July and 31 December 2012, there were 4 breaches of the commonwealth's Aged Care Act identified in 4 public sector residential aged-care facilities.

All these breaches in public sector residential aged-care facilities were remedied within the timeframes set by the commonwealth.

All facilities are currently operating with a full three year accreditation period granted by the commonwealth.

There were 22 breaches during Labor's last year in office, for the same period — i.e. 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

There has been a change in commonwealth practice for issuing notices relating to breaches of the Aged Care Act since 2011.

- (2)(a) There were no breaches of the Health Services Act for any public sector residential aged-care facility between 1 July 2011 and 30 June 2012.
- (2)(b) There were no breaches of the Health Services Act for any public sector residential aged-care facility between 1 July and 31 December 2012.

The Health Services Act sets out the governance structures for Victorian public health services which provide residential aged-care facilities as part of their broader operations acting as commonwealth-approved providers in their own right. The Health Services Act does not prescribe standards in relation to provision of services within public sector residential aged-care facilities, that being a function of the Aged Care Act.

Housing: rent increases

9563. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Housing: In relation to the removal of the market rent increase cap of \$35 per week:

- (1) How many tenants will pay rent increases as a result of this change that are greater than \$35 per week.
- (2) What were the average market rent increases across Victoria for public housing tenants for the most recent year available.
- (3) What were the average market rent increases in the north-western region for public housing tenants for the most recent year available.
- (4) What is the expected government revenue as a result of the \$35 per week cap removal.
- (5) How many tenants will receive rent increases greater than \$35 per week as a result of this change but will not be eligible for a rental rebate.
- (6) What is the expected increase in expenditure through the rental rebate as a result of this change.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The Department of Human Services has written to 971 tenants advising them of a market rent increase greater than \$35 per week as of 11 August 2013. However, some of these tenants may have lodged an application and be eligible for a rental rebate which results in their actual rent increase being less or equal to \$35 per week. Tenants can also seek a review of their new market rent value by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

- (2) For the market rent change that took effect from 11 August 2013, the weighted average increase in market rents is approximately 2.9 per cent for public housing tenants across Victoria.
- (3) For the market rent change that took effect from 11 August 2013, the weighted average increase in market rents is approximately 2.5 per cent for public housing tenants in the former north-west metropolitan region.
- (4) The expected government revenue as a result of the removal of the \$35 per week cap as at 11 August 2013 cannot be readily provided. As per response to question 1, some tenants may have lodged an application for a rental rebate and/or sought a review of their market rent value which may change the rent they pay.

(5) & (6)

As there is no requirement for tenants paying market rent to advise the department of their income details, the department is not able to determine the number of tenants who have had rent increases of greater than \$35 per week but are not eligible for a rebate. The department is unable to determine the subsequent increase in expenditure through rent rebate for the same reason.

Community services: out-of-home care services

9564. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to Victoria's out-of-home care system (OOHC), and findings and recommendations of the Ombudsman's own motion investigation into Child Protection — Out of Home Care, May 2010:

- (1) To what extent have recommendations 9, 19 and 20 of the Ombudsman's report been implemented and why is it that Victoria still has more foster carers leaving the foster care system each year than new foster carers being recruited (see AIHW Child Protection Australia 2011–12 table 5.3).
- (2) Is the government aware that, as noted by the 2010 report by the University of NSW Social Policy Research Centre Financial and Non-Financial Support to Formal and Informal Out of Home Carers (table 5.2), Victoria pays as much as \$5000 less per year to carers for the care of a 10-year-old child compared to NSW and what is being done to close the gap between Victoria's carer payments and those in other states and territories.
- (3) What has been done to develop a new funding model for OOHC as recommended by the Ombudsman and the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry (recommendation 25) and who has been formally consulted regarding the development of such a model and when will it be implemented.
- (4) Of the 690 Victorian children in OOHC in 2012 that could not be placed in planned foster care, kinship care or residential care, how many were kept in hotels and motels, for what period of time and at what cost.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Recommendation 9 has been implemented.

Recommendation 19 is in progress.

Recommendation 20 is in progress.

The Victorian government is currently exploring new ways to strengthen the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

- (2) The Victorian government has funded a doubling of the number of additional therapeutic foster care placements providing 100 additional placements across the state. Additionally, the work on foster care recruitment and retention referred to in my response to question (1) above will assist in planning to improve supports for foster carers.

The government is working with the commonwealth to explore the current barriers within the tax and industrial relations systems that prevent the establishment of a professional model of foster care.

- (3) This work is presently under way. Consultation has already been undertaken with community service organisations as well as Aboriginal-controlled community service organisations.
- (4) I presume that Ms Hartland's reference to 690 children actually relates to the number of children in 'other home based care' as referred to in the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's publication *Child Protection Australia 2011-12*, table A21. This is not a reference to children who could not be placed in planned foster care, kinship care or residential care. Rather the category of 'other home based care' refers to intensive and complex home based care, which is care for children with higher levels of care needs, and accordingly these carers receive higher levels of payment from the government.

In relation to children accommodated in hotels and motels, in the period 2 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, the daily average number of children accommodated in a motel/hotel was 0.07, with a total of 27 placements nights over the whole year. Approximately \$15 000 was expended on hotel/motel accommodation. The figure of 0.07 in 2012-13 is a significant reduction on the 0.7 daily average number of children in motels/hotels in 2011-12.

Employment and trade: Ballarat job losses

- 9839. MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Employment and Trade): In relation to the 30 job cuts at IBM in Ballarat reported in the *Ballarat Courier* on 20 August 2013, what assistance will the Napthine government provide workers who have been affected by these job cuts.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Assistance is being provided to the 30 workers in Ballarat affected by the recent job losses reported in the *Ballarat Courier* on 20 August 2013.

Retraining information and support has been provided though the Ballarat office of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development under the Victorian Training Guarantee.

The Victorian Training Guarantee support was provided in collaboration with the commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, as part of the Employment Response Plan for the Ballarat region.

Other assistance was provided in the form of information packs under the Business in Transition Support (BiTS) program to Man Power, the labour hire company that provided the contract staff to IBM. The BiTS information packs were provided through the Department of State Development, Business and Innovation (DSDBI) and coordinated with the support provided by Man Power to the workers affected.

IBM management has advised DSDBI that they are assisting the workers to apply for other roles that IBM will soon be recruiting for at the Ballarat facility as well as elsewhere within the company.

In addition, IBM is providing access to employment support services to help identify employment opportunities outside of the company.

IBM advised that each of the people affected by the redundancies had received new skills training over the last two years with each person to graduate in September 2013 with a certificate level III.

Employment and trade: Ballarat job losses

- 9910. MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Employment and Trade): In relation to the 25 job redundancies at Ballarat's Rivers site recently, what assistance will the Napthine government provide workers affected by these job cuts.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Regional Development Victoria (RDV) has liaised with Rivers Australia in relation to job losses in Ballarat and discussed coordinating information sessions for affected employees with the relevant government agencies and service providers. This includes information regarding access to retraining opportunities under the Workers in Transition program and potential job matching with businesses that may be seeking additional skilled employees in Ballarat.

RDV is also working with Rivers Australia on plans for new investment in Ballarat.

Employment and trade: Warrnambool job losses

9911. MS TIERNEY — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Employment and Trade): In relation to the six job redundancies at Warrnambool's Warehouse Sales Electrical Discounts store recently, what assistance will the Napthine government provide workers affected by these redundancies.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Warehouse Sales Electrical Discounts store in Warrnambool has recently closed with liquidators appointed to the small retail chain of stores.

Regional Development Victoria has provided the liquidator of the company with information for affected employees from the relevant government agencies and service providers.

This includes information on the Workers in Transition program for access to retraining opportunities, as well as career advice and information on job search assistance.